DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 195 933 CS 005 738

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TITLE A Survey of the Use of the Cloze Procedure in Selected Schools in Western New York State.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the College Reading Association (24th, Baltimore, MD, October 30-November 1, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cloze Procedure; Elementary Secondary Education; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Research; School Surveys; *Use Studies

ABSTRACT

A total of 255 reading teachers and classroom teachers completed questionnaires in a study that examined the use of the cloze procedure in selected schools in western New York State. The sample included reading teachers and classroom teachers in grades four through six and junior high school reading teachers and content area teachers. The results revealed that most of the teachers used the cloze procedure and ranked it as an important instructional technique. Approximately 80% reported using it for diagnosis, as a pretest/posttest, and for placing students in instructional groups, but fewer than half used the cloze procedure to determine text readability. A high percentage of the teachers used cloze to develop comprehension. Over 75% reported using it to develop ability to use context clues and to develop vocabulary, while 25% said that they used cloze to develop listening skills. (A copy of the questionnaire is appended.) (FL)

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A SURVEY OF THE USE OF THE CLOZE PROCEDURE IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN WESTERN NEW YORK STATE

SPRING 1980

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CS005738

A SURVEY OF THE USE OF THE CLOZE PROCEDURE IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN WESTERN NEW YORK STATE

The purpose of this study was to examine the use of the cloze procedure by classroom teachers and reading teachers in selected school districts in Western New York State. In the Spring of 1980 questionnaires totaling 436 were sent to area schools; 255 questionnaires were completed and returned indicating a response of 58%. The sample included reading teachers and classroom teachers in grades 4-6, and reading teachers and content teachers in the junior high school.

The contributions made by psycholinguists to the teaching of reading through the understanding of the process of reading has been significant. Specifically, the cloze procedure is a result of psycholinguistic research and its application to reading. Cloze is defined as a procedure in which words, deleted from a passage by some objectively specified process, are replaced by the reader.

I. General Information

Forty-five percent of the sample reported they had learned about the cloze procedure while enrolled in a graduate or undergraduate class, 22% from a reading resource person and 17% from a colleague. These results indicate the role of the college and university reading programs in the dissemination of research findings and application to the classroom, and the role of the reading resource persons in the schools.

Forty-three percent reported a low degree of use of the cloze procedure, 38% a moderate degree, 5% a high degree with 14% representing those who did not use the cloze. The findings indicate that there is a need for an understanding of the rationale of the cloze procedure and especially its purposes and its versatility in instruction and diagnosis.

The cloze procedure was used in the following content areas: language arts, 63%; social studies, 45%; science, 31%; math, 9% and foreign languages, 3%. Respondents could check more than one area if applicable (M.R.Q.).* Again these results demonstrate a need for information regarding the use of the cloze in all content areas especially in the areas of science and math.

Approximately 47% of the subjects reported that they used the maze (multiple-choice), 45% the modified cloze, e.g. lexical cloze (deletion of nouns, verbs), and 40% the standard cloze. Category "other" represented 7%. (M.R.Q.) Additional information regarding the type of cloze to be used in content areas for specific purposes of instruction would be helpful.

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* Multiple Response Question

Over one-half of the subjects discussed the completed cloze passages with students most of the time. Thirty-seven percent discussed the cloze passages occasionally and 10% not at all. Sixty-four percent replied that they asked the student to tell why he/she chose a particular answer. Thirty-six percent replied they did not.

Sixty-three percent analyzed the response syntactically while 37% did not. Eighty-one percent analyzed the responses semantically while 19% did not.

Over one-half of the subjects are discussing the completed cloze passages with students most of the time indicating that teachers recognize the importance of the discussion of the completed cloze passages in the development of reading skills.

Approximately two-thirds of the sample are asking students to tell why they chose an answer and about two-thirds are analyzing the responses syntactically. The high number of teachers (81%) analyzing the response semantically suggests that teachers are aware of the use of the cloze procedure in using context.

Seventy-two percent reported use of the cloze procedure with average students, 68% with below average students and 52% with above average students. (M.R.Q.) The replies indicated almost three-fourths used the cloze procedure with average students and about two-thirds with below average students with about one-half using it with above average students.

Sixty-four percent indicated the cloze is an effective instructional tool with average readers, 49% with below average readers and 47% with above average readers. (M.R.Q.)

The cloze was effective as a diagnostic tool with both the average and below average readers (42%). Twenty-eight percent reported it effective as a diagnostic tool with the above average reader. (M.R.Q.)

The cloze was reported to be most effective as an instructional tool with the average readers with an even distribution reported for average readers and above average readers. It was reported to be equally effective as a diagnostic tool with average and below average readers.

II. Purposes of the Cloze Procedure evaluated in order of importance. (M.R.Q.)

Ninety-two percent indicated the use of the cloze procedure as an instructional technique an important purpose of the cloze with 65% ranking it as the most important.

Eighty-two percent reported the cloze as important for diagnosis while 37% ranked it as second in importance.

As a pretest/posttest 81% rated it important with 36% indicating its use was second in importance.

Seventy-nine percent reported the cloze as important for placement in instructional groups with 20% ranking it as third in importance.

Forty-four percent had used the cloze procedure to determine text readability while 23% rated it as third in importance in use of the cloze procedure.

In summary, most of the teachers reported the use of the cloze procedure and ranked it as an important instructional technique. Approximately 80% reported using the cloze for diagnosis, as a pretest/posttest, and as placement in instructional groups. Use of the cloze for diagnosis and as a pretest/posttest was ranked second in importance. However, as placement for instructional groups, the cloze procedure was ranked third in importance. Less than one-half used the cloze procedure to determine text readability with one-fourth ranking it as third in importance in the use of the cloze procedure.

III. Areas of Instruction evaluated in order of importance. (M.R.Q.)

In this section of the questionnaire subjects were asked to identify the areas of instruction in which they had used the cloze procedure. They were also asked to rank the areas in order of importance.

Eighty-seven percent reported use of the cloze technique to develop comprehension with 46% ranking it as the most important area of instruction.

Seventy-nine percent reported use of the cloze to develop the ability to use context clues with 29% ranking it as the most important area and 27% as the second most important area.

Seventy-two percent reported use of the cloze to develop vocabulary with 31% ranking it as the second most important area.

Use of the cloze procedure to develop word analysis skills was indicated by 65% of the respondents with 27% ranking this area as fourth in importance.

Fifty-two percent reported using the cloze procedure to develop ability to use syntactic clues with 23% ranking it as third in importance.

Twenty-three percent reported the use of the cloze to develop listening skills with 13% ranking it as third in importance.

Findings demonstrate a high percent of the sample using the cloze procedure to develop comprehension with almost one-half ranking comprehension as the most important area of instruction for using the cloze. Over three fourths reported using the cloze procedure to develop ability to use context clues and to develop vocabulary. The development of vocabulary was ranked second in importance and the development of ability to use context clues was ranked first in importance by one-fourth and second by one-fourth of the sample.

Although the use of the cloze procedure to develop word analysis skills was reported by 55%, it was ranked fourth in importance. Over one-half used the cloze procedure to develop ability to use syntactic clues but ranked it third in importance. One-fourth reported using the cloze to develop listening skills with a small percent ranking it third in importance.

IV. Additional Findings

Ninety-five percent of the teachers reported having conducted no research using the cloze procedure while 5% had conducted research.

Respondents represented a range of years of teaching experience. The third to the fifteenth year represented the greatest number of replies.

Grades 1-6 represented 69% of the sample, grades 7-8, 27%, and grades 9-12, 4%.

V. Conclusions

The cloze procedure as a technique in the teaching of reading is being gradually accepted by teachers in area schools as reported by the sample.

The various uses of the cloze procedure are not being developed to the fullest extent.

The cloze procedure has distinct application for college courses and public school programs.

The cloze procedure could be explored further by reading teachers and content teachers in public schools through in-service programs.

Footnote

This research was supported in part by a scholarship grant from the New York State Chapter, Pi State, of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society.

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READING

Please complete the following questions by checking or ranking the responses appropriately.

1. How did you first learn about the cloze procedure?
   ___1. Graduate or Undergraduate Course
   ___2. Reading Resource Person
   ___3. Professional Journal
   ___4. Colleague
   ___5. Other

2. To what extent have you utilized the cloze procedure?
   ___1. High degree
   ___2. Moderate degree
   ___3. Low degree
   ___4. Not at all

3. In what content areas have you used the cloze procedure? (check as many as apply)
   ___1. Social studies
   ___2. Science
   ___3. Math
   ___4. Language arts
   ___5. Foreign languages

4. For what purposes have you used the cloze procedure? Please rank in order of importance. (1=most important, 2=second most important, etc.)
   ___1. As an instructional technique
   ___2. Diagnosis
   ___3. As a pretest/posttest
   ___4. Placement in instructional groups (determining reading level of individual student)
   ___5. Determine text readability
   ___6. Other_____

5. In what areas of instruction have you used the cloze procedure? Please rank in order of importance. (1=most important, 2=second most important, etc.)
   ___1. Develop word analysis skills
   ___2. Develop comprehension
   ___3. Develop ability to use syntactic clues
   ___4. Develop vocabulary
   ___5. Develop ability to use context clues
   ___6. Develop listening skills
   ___7. Other Explain_____
   _____

6. Check the type of cloze used.
   ___1. Standard cloze (every 5th word deletion)
   ___2. Maze (multiple choice)
   ___3. Modified cloze, e.g., lexical cloze (deletion of nouns, verbs)
   ___4. Other Explain_____
   _____

___ 1
___ 2
___ 3
___ 4
___ 5
___ 6
___ 7
___ 8
___ 9
___ 10
___ 11
___ 12
___ 13
___ 14
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___ 19
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___ 21

7. Do you discuss completed cloze passages with students?
   ___1. Most of the time.
   ___2. Occasionally.
   ___3. Not at all.

___ 22

8. Have you analyzed the type of response made to each cloze deletion

   a) by asking the student to tell you why he/she chose a particular answer?
      ___1. Yes.
      ___2. No

___ 23

   b) by analyzing the response syntactically (sentence structure)?
      ___1. Yes.
      ___2. No.

___ 24

   c) by analyzing the response semantically (word meaning)?
      ___1. Yes.
      ___2. No.

___ 25

   If you use an other analysis, please explain._____

___ 26

_____

9. With what types of students have you used the cloze procedure? (check as many as apply)
   ___1. Above average.
   ___2. Average.
   ___3. Below average.

___ 27
___ 28
___ 29

10. With what types of readers has the cloze been effective as an instructional tool? (check as many as apply)
    ___1. Above average.
    ___2. Average.
    ___3. Below average.

___ 30
___ 31
___ 32

11. With what types of readers has the cloze been effective as a diagnostic tool? (check as many as apply)
    ___1. Above average.
    ___2. Average.
    ___3. Below average.

___ 33
___ 34
___ 35

12. Have you conducted any research using the cloze procedure?
    ___1. Yes.
    ___2. No.

___ 36

    If yes, please elaborate_____

___ 37

_____

13. How many years have you been teaching?

    ___ years

___ ___ 38-39

14. What grade are you teaching?

    ___ grade

___ 40

15. What is your subject area? (if applicable)

_____ 41

16. What is the name of your school district?

_____ 42

17. General comments and recommendations for using the cloze procedure.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please return this questionnaire using the self addressed, stamped envelope.

Return the post card separately.

Thank you,

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